

REMARKS

Claims 1-2 and 4-10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by European Patent Application 1262534. The European Application discloses a removable pressure sensitive adhesive that has a gel fraction of at least 70% when cured. The adhesive must remain gelled after curing so that the pressure sensitive adhesive sheet of the invention can be removed from the surface to which it is applied. For example, the adhesive sheet can be in the form of removable masking tape or a removable sticky note.

In contrast, amended claim 1 states that the adhesive dries and sets firm when fully cured. (Basis for drying language is at page 6, lines 10-13; and basis for the setting firm language is at page 5, lines 21-26.) The adhesive of the European Application remains at least 70% gelled when it is cured; such a gelled composition is not set firm. Further, it is submitted that the language regarding drying and setting firm when fully cured is a property of the adhesive and thus should be given patentable weight; the language is not merely an intended use of the adhesive. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that amended claim 1 and the dependent claims are novel and nonobvious compared to the European Application.

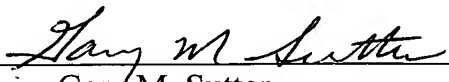
New claim 22 is a combination of original claims 1 and 18, which the Examiner stated would be patentable.

Claims 6 and 7 state properties of the adhesive, and thus they should be given patentable weight. They do not merely recite an intended use of the adhesive. It is clear from the specification, for example in the Background section, that the Applicant has described setting and curing of the adhesive at room temperature, which is conventionally understood to be 21°C.

Claims 3, 11-12 and 15-17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over the European Application in view of Columbus (U.S. 5,416,140). Columbus discloses a gelled adhesive having thixotropic properties so that it can be dispensed from a squeeze bottle or flexible tube. The adhesive dries and solidifies when cured. Applicant respectfully submits that it would not be obvious to combine the teachings of Columbus with those of the European Application. As discussed

above, the adhesive of the European Application must remain gelled after curing so that the pressure sensitive adhesive sheet of the invention can be removed from the surface to which it is applied. The use of the Columbus adhesive, which dries and solidifies upon curing, would defeat the purpose of the invention described in the European Application.

Respectfully submitted,



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